THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, GAIL and OVL have joined Daewoo International in exploration of Block A-l, Myanmar offshore. In addition, an MoU has been signed on 5th October, 2004 between OVL and Daewoo for Block A-3, according to which 30% of the share would be available to the Indian parties (OVL and GAIL).

Entry of Private Sector in Pipeline Sector

2019. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to allow private operators to lay pipelines;

(b) whether it is a fact that GAIL,which is holding monopoly at the moment, has opposed the proposal; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposal and the reasons for opposing the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) GAIL has expressed reservations regarding the entry of other players in gas transmission business, claiming it would hamper the smooth operation of pipelines and restrict growth opportunities for GAIL in the sector. GAIL has therefore, sought monopoly rights to lay inter-state natural gas transmission pipelines in the country.

Under the existing policy, any entity can set up gas transmission and distribution networks without any Authorization/license from the Government. Natural Gas/LNG is under Open General License (OGL) and 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is permitted for natural gas pipeline projects. However, as natural gas pipelines are highly capital-intensive projects, they are considered natural monopolies and, therefore, Government propose to regulate them. Based on the feedback received from various stakeholders, including major domestic and international oil and gas companies, different Chambers of Commerce and Industries, State Governments, etc., and after inter-ministerial consultations a Draft Pipeline Policy is under consideration which envisages the development of a nationwide gas grid in a competitive environment, involving both the public sector

and private sector, under the over view of a Regulator. The Pipeline Policy aims to encourage competition, efficiency and greater investment in this sector, all of which will ultimately benefit the consumer and the economy in general. Specific attention is proposed to be paid to equitable regional distribution.

Allotment of LPG agencies to dependents of martyrs

2020. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provide gas agencies, petrol pump" agencies to the war-widows and dependents of martyrs;

(b) if so, the criteria in this regard;

(c) the number of application received during each of the last five years, till date in this regard;

(d) whether gas agency/petrol pump agency has been granted to all the applicants, so far;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether any complaints have been received in this regard so far and if so, the details thereof and whether these complaints have been redressed suitably; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) Government has two schemes for allotment of dealerships/distributorships to, among others was widows and dependants of martyrs as under:

(i) A one time special scheme for allotment of retail outlet dealerships/ LPG distributorships to widows/next of kin of Defence personnel killed in action in 'Operation Vijay" (Kargil).

(ii) A discretionary Quota of retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships/ SKO-LDO dealerships, on genuine compassionate grounds, to the deserving persons in the following two categories:-